WILL TEACH AGRICULTURE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

By B. E. POWELL of the University of Illinois.

HOW shall the country boy and girl be kept on the farm? In spite of the portentous anxiety with which men of weight and wisdom ask this question, the answer is simple. Interest them in the teeming, dramatic life of the farm and it will be impossible to drive them away.

Professor Charles of the agricultural department of the University of Illinois thinks he sees the application. In one of his articles he has said: "Since the attitude of the country girl or boy toward the farm life is largely determined before his high school days, the importance of reaching him early and in the best way is apparent. Teaching is perhaps the most difficult of all the arts, but if the results of modern scientific achievement can be placed before the pupil while he still has the enthusiasm, the alertness and the spirit of inquiry of youth the future of our agriculture is assured."

Note that last, "The future of our agriculture is assured." No uncertain statement that—rather the word of a man who has seen his vision clearly and has grasped its significance surely. In other words, the professor believes that, if the country girl can be brought to see the solid fun there is in scientifically coaxing an unscientific old hen to lay two eggs where she has been in the habit of depositing one, that girl will not have brain room to harbor a desire to thump the keys of a typewriter. If the country boy can be brought to exercise his martial spirit upon a bellicose army of insect marauders he will become so interested in the fight that he will graduate from college an insect expert instead of a football authority.

Illinois Professor's Idea.

As a consequence of this belief Professor Charles is planning a systematic attack upon agricultural courses. They no longer are to be the property of the colleges. They are to be given to the elementary schools as well. The most scientific principles of agriculture are to be adapted to the younger children. These principles are to be worked out before their eyes and with their own hands whenever possible. Plant and animal life in its varying phases is to be part of the school curriculum. This means the addition of gardens and even zoos to the school equipment, neither one as expensive nor as difficult as might seem at first thought.

With both of them Professor Charles has experimented, and the results have been most satisfactory. The work was done while he was head of the scientific department of the Northern Illinois State Normal school, located at Dekalb.

It was found that boys will raise corn in the fields with as much zest as they will raise the devil on the city streets; that girls find more pleasure in presenting friends at Christmas with flowers grown by their own care than they ever find in giving meaningless "doodads" to collect dust on dressers. And scientific principles are taught while the corn and the roses are grown that prove every bit as absorbing as the principles of poker taught in haymows or of elaborate hairdressing taught in hot bedrooms.

The results of the work with the children proved to Professor Charles what he long had suspected—humans have a strong instinct for nature which needs only the chance to develop.

Battle With Snout Beetles.

A few years ago the farmers in a certain section of Illinois were annoyed by insect pests that were destroying the young corn plants. They were "snout beetles," so large that one exasperated farmer christened them elephant bugs. They throve on poisonous sprays; they were unmolested by the birds. A flock of chickens was turned into one field, and the bugs clamped their stout legs about the chickens' bills so tightly that they could not so much as squawk as they flew from the fray. To Dr. Forbes, head of the state laboratory of natural history, located at the university, an appeal was dispatched. He sent assistants to the scene of distress, who after months of investigation and experiment found that the insects bred chiefly on rushes which were especially abundant on the untilled lands joining the cornfields. It was found also that, while ordinary means of extermination did not affect them, careful and thorough cultivation would free the fields from the pests. It was a twentieth century battle with a belligerent and determined foe, and it called for all the keenness of mind, alertness of spirit and scientific knowledge that could be brought to bear.

This idea of introducing the study of agriculture into the elementary schools is the natural development from the older nature study. One cannot but notice in the nature study productions of Mr. Charles the emphasis that is placed upon the practical. Do not tell the child facts merely—prove them to him. Do not be content to teach principles only—make the child exemplify these principles by his own work.

A few pictures and descriptions of the work done at Dekalb will make for the best understanding of what Professor Charles has accomplished. One shows the boys at work in the gardens devoted to vegetables and field crops. Records were kept of all difficulties and how they were turned into triumphs by the use of fertilizers, rotation of crops, etc.

School Flower Gardens.

The school flower gardens demonstrated that the unusual and the expensive in plants are by no means necessary if one covets beauty about him. The near at hand often will yield the best results. Transplanted wild flowers grew to rare beauty when coddled in captivity into doing their very best, as the spray of bluebells (or, as it sometimes is known, Jacob's ladder) proves. The children were taught the economical value of our birds, especially the commoner varieties.

Our picture shows five young screech owls about three weeks old, which will be ready to fly in a few days. The sign upon which they are perched originally read, "No Shooting on These Grounds," but a mischievous wag of a lad, noticing the little screechers' habit of perching upon it, went aside from his studies in nature long enough to dispense with the "S." Several young screech owls were kept in the Dekalb zoo for the purpose of studying their feeding habits. Observations as accurate as possible were made also upon the free birds. It was found that the screech owl is a very useful citizen—a real economic asset, in fact, as he lives largely upon caterpillars, moths, beetles and mice.

A part of the work in the study of birds done by the training school children was the taking of a bird census of the school campus. This comprised seventy acres and, counting the nests, noting the varieties, etc., proved a very valuable form of field study. One of the interesting things found in a field not far from the campus was a meadow lark's nest with a cowbird's egg in it. It may be new to some to know that the cowbird, which is the smallest of our blackbirds, builds no nest and has no fixed habitation. Her eggs she lays by stealth in the nests of other birds, to which she delegates the unwished for task of bringing up her offspring. The cowbird gets its name from its habit of staying around cattle pastures. Often a row of them may be seen perched upon an old cow's spine, she apparently glad to get her back scratched with so little personal effort.

The Schoolroom Zoo.

A word about the zoo which Professor Charles established at Dekalb. Its purpose was to develop an understanding of animals, a sympathy for them and a realization of their value economically in the scheme of things. There were pet dogs and several pet cats, which did not regard themselves as connected with the zoo at all, but as part of the school. The animals now are being transferred to the state university, where they are received enthusiastically by various men of science. The wolf, Katrina, has been an inmate of the zoo for nine years and is as playful as a kitten. "Rastus, the coon," perched on Professor Charles' shoulder, also is an old and privileged resident of the zoo.

Buddhism Passing Away.

The flight of the dalai lama from Lassa on the approach of the Chinese army, which has reasserted the sovereignty of China, shatters the spiritual influence and authority of one of the world's great pontiffs, revered by 200,000,000 of human beings.

The dalai lama at Lassa, selected by a strange mixture of intrigue and superstition, is to the Buddhists of northeastern Asia the representative of Buddha on earth, the incarnation of the divine, the infallible and inspired ruler of the spiritual forces of the universe known to man. From the uttermost frozen boundaries of Siberia, from the rice fields of China and Japan and from the tropical islands of southeastern Asia men save for a lifetime to go on the arduous pilgrimage to Lassa.

Inviolable in that city, encircled by frozen and lofty wastes, he ruled alone. But his day is over. First English and then Chinese troops have driven him forth. He fled four years ago to Pekin. Now he flees to India.

Buddhism itself is passing. In China its temples are falling to ruin and its yellow clad priests grow fewer. In Korea its followers are turning to Christianity. In Japan it furnishes a ritual and service men accept and support because the women still believe in it and go to temples in which by a mutual division of labor the men pay the bills and the women pray.

Early divided from the Tibetan cult, the Buddhism of Ceylon and Siam is unaffected, but the Buddhism which spreads over Siberia, Chinese Tartary, China, Japan and a vast island world to the south reveres the dalai lama. His going will change no local rite or worship, but it is the beginning of the fall and passing of a faith which for 2,600 years has profoundly influenced the lives, morals, acts and religious thoughts of hundreds of millions.

Advertising In China.

Consul Henry D. Baker offers the following trade suggestions: I was impressed with the possibilities of pictorial advertising as a means of promoting American trade in China. The Chinese appear to have a fondness, amounting almost to a veneration, for pictures, and foreign art especially excites their attention because of its difference to what they are accustomed to. The people have an especial fascination for calendars, and they never throw away a well illustrated one, but always keep it in a prominent place. In supplying advertising calendars for China some attention should be paid to the special tastes or prejudices of the people. I was told of one American company which had made a serious mistake in having used pictures of a dog in its advertising posters. Dogs in China are mostly distinguished as street scavengers and are not cherished family pets, as in the occident. Pictorial advertising makes it easier for American manufacturers to popularize their trademarks, and once a certain trademark is popularized no article in that particular line will be bought unless it bears that trademark.

Cole Younger, Ex-Bandit, to Become Lecturer

Missourian Who Was Intended For the Ministry Will Preach From the Rostrum on What Life Has Taught Him

COLE YOUNGER is older than he used to be when he was younger. He has learned wisdom with the years, in the exceedingly hard university of experience, where he matriculated early and took all the courses. He is still a postgraduate student, but he considers himself sufficiently wise at last to take to the lecture platform and preach lay sermons to the other students. Younger, after many years of preparation, has prepared and proposes to deliver a lecture wherein he will set forth and elucidate his own ideals of life as developed through a career which has no parallel in America or elsewhere.

Thomas Coleman Younger is the full name of this Missouri ex-bandit who has become in the edge of his old age—he celebrated recently his sixty-sixth birthday—a safe, sane and highly respected citizen. The world has nothing against him except what it remembers of his outlawry. The law no longer has anything whatever against him. He has expiated by a full quarter century of service in the Minnesota penitentiary such misdeeds as he committed during the ten years when he was the brains of the band of bandits of whom the late Jesse James was the daredevil leader. Cole Younger was the oldest man in that band, yet with the single exception of Frank James, the next oldest, he has outlived all of his outlaw associates.

Leaving aside all suggestions of maudlin sentiment, Cole Younger is a pathetic figure. In 1903, twenty-seven years after he mounted his horse and rode away on his last raid, he returned to the little old town of Lee's Summit, in Missouri, near which place he was born and where he grew up. He settled down to live out the remnant of his days among his remaining relatives and his early friends, all of whom were loyal to him through thick and thin and not one of whom ever has admitted or ever will admit that "Bud" Younger was at any time a bad man at heart.

In Lee's Summit there are old fellows who still call him "Bud." To them he is merely a new edition of the "Bud" Younger who was one of the handsomest, brightest boys of the neighborhood up to the second year of the civil war, when at the age of seventeen he joined the troop of the Confederate guerrilla chieftain, William Clarke Quantrill, whom William Elsey Connelley of Topeka, in "Quantrill and the Border Wars," a book just published, calls "the bloodiest man in our civil war."

But for the civil war it is highly probable that instead of Cole Younger, ex-bandit, the world now would know the Rev. Dr. Thomas Coleman Younger, for in his youth he was intended for the ministry. To understand just how the Younger boys and the James boys developed into outlaws one must understand the antebellum, belium and postbellum conditions existing along the Kansas-Missouri border, where took place during civil war days the most desperate, devilish, hand to hand fighting on the entire thousand mile battle line of that gigantic conflict.

Quantrill, a renegade from Ohio, as Mr. Connelley shows by conclusive evidence, espoused the southern cause merely that he might have opportunity to glut his insatiate lust for human blood. Many of his followers were young men, some of them mere boys, who took service under his black flag because "the other side" had murdered or outraged their close kin and they wanted a chance to "get even." They could ride hard and shoot straight. Three years' tuition under Quantrill, in his saddle school of blood lust and pillage, was calculated to give almost any boy a cross eyed comprehension of things in general.

Four of the Younger brothers were outlaws. John was killed shortly after the war by a Pinkerton detective. John also killed the detective. James and Robert Younger were captured with Cole in Minnesota shortly after the Northfield bank robbery, in which the cashier was killed. Three other bandits were killed and two escaped. The three Youngers were sentenced to life imprisonment. Robert died in prison in 1889 from consumption. Cole and James were paroled after twenty-five years' incarceration without a mark against them in the prison deportment books. James committed suicide because the state of Minnesota would not permit him to marry a woman with whom he had fallen in love. Later Cole received a full pardon.

The other day, sitting on the porch of his home, with two of his little grandnieces upon his knees, the old ex-bandit said, "They all love me more than I deserve." Then he talked about his forthcoming lecture. "There is no heroism in outlawry," he said. "I don't like to say much about the unlawful, the bandit life, because it seems to me that more may be done toward obliterating the effects of past evil by appealing to the better nature and by emphasizing the inspiring and ennobling examples of those whose lives have been a blessing and a benediction to the world."

Younger proposes in his lecture to emphasize the thought that the real heroes of the world are those of the mart, the street and the home; that the noblest deeds are done in silence and obscurity and not in the passion and thrill of battle. He says we see about us every day the Benedict Arnolds of the home, the office, the bank, the store, men who are traitors to life's higher ideals. How's that for sentiment from a reformed bandit? "What Life Has Taught Me" is the title of his lecture, and just here we may quote something which his brother, James Younger, said to a newspaper correspondent some years ago while the brothers were still in the Stillwater penitentiary, for no doubt Cole Younger's prison life taught him also this lesson:

"There has not been one day here in which I have not put my mind to this problem of preserving myself to enjoy those years of freedom which I feel we shall have. I have put my old life as far from my thoughts as the prison has put it from my hands. I have not read one single story of crime. I have made patience, cheerfulness, kindness, the habits of my life. I have put bitterness down until I have no bitterness. I have learned the whole lesson of self control."

ROBERTUS LOVE.

THOMAS COLEMAN YOUNGER AT SIXTY-SIX.

The Yearn For Old Ireland

By BOYLE O'BRIEN

IRELAND, isle of the emerald sod,
Ever by heroes and poets trod!
Ireland, the patriot's island home,
Washed by the brine and the bubbling foam!
Ireland, thy exiled sons today
Yearn for thy shores that are far away.

Sons and daughters of Ireland yearn
Back to the old green sod to turn,
Back to the fields our fathers still
Patiently plow and plant and till;
Back to the thatch roof cottage homes
Yearningly turns the heart that roams.

"THE THATCH ROOF COTTAGE HOME."

Proud are we of thy spirit, proud
In that it never yet was cowed,
Though by the despot stricken sore,
Splashed its green with the crimson gore,
Struggling still for the free estate
That came not early, but must come late.

Ireland's wrongs of a thousand years
Plead to heaven in blood and tears!
Ireland's cause—it can never fail!
Tears and blood—will they not avail?
Ireland to liberty still aspires,
While her sons succeed her sires.

Ireland, girt with her sobbing seas,
She has drunk to the bitter lees
Pain and penury, yet she stands
Facing freedom with eager hands.
This the thought that inspires today:
Ireland's sun is of brightening ray!